

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: [**January 12, 2018**](#)
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Man Convicted for Role in 1964 Civil Rights Slayings Dies in Prison

JACKSON – The man convicted for his involvement in the deaths of three civil rights workers in Mississippi in 1964 has died in prison.

Edgar Ray Killen, who would have turned 93 on Jan. 17, was pronounced dead at the hospital at the Mississippi State Penitentiary. He died at 9 p.m. Thursday.

Killen was serving a total of 60 years for manslaughter for the June 21, 1964, deaths of James Chaney, Andrew Goodman, and Michael Schwerner in Neshoba County.

His first trial in 1967 ended in a mistrial. He was retried 38 years later after the state reopened the murder investigations, and was convicted on June 21, 2005. He was sentenced June 23, 2005 to three consecutive 20-year sentences. The Mississippi Supreme Court upheld his convictions in 2007.

The cause and manner of death are pending an autopsy. However, no foul play is suspected.